

device removed or permanently disabled at the time of purchase. This is a common sense solution would allow businesses to continue to utilize this technology while at the same time it would grant consumers the ability to protect their privacy.

Although I recognize that time is running out in the present session of Congress, it is important that this issue be raised. Congress should act to give our constituents the opportunity to have these tracking devices removed or disabled on articles they purchase, and I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that I am joined by TOM LANTOS and 28 of our colleagues in introducing a bill to reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA) through FY 2007. This bipartisan conservation incentive program helps to protect the world's most valuable tropical forests through "debt-for-nature" mechanisms.

This bipartisan reauthorization we are introducing today was developed with the Bush Administration, the Nature Conservancy, the World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. The Administration and these highly respected environmental organizations are to be commended for all of their excellent work on the TFCA and this bill.

In the 105th Congress I, along with our former colleagues Lee Hamilton and John Kasich, introduced the legislation that established the TFCA. It was overwhelmingly approved and enacted in 1998. The TFCA was reauthorized in 2001 through the end of this year.

The TFCA is based on the previous Bush Administration's Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI) that allows the President to restructure debt in exchange for conservation efforts in Latin America. The TFCA expands on the EAI and allows protection of threatened tropical forests worldwide. A conservative estimate of 39.5 million acres of tropical forests will be protected by TFCA agreements since its enactment in 1998.

The United States has a significant national interest in protecting tropical forests in developing countries. Tropical forests provide a wide range of benefits. They harbor 50–90 percent of the earth's terrestrial biodiversity. They act as "carbon sinks," absorbing massive quantities of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby reducing greenhouse gases. They regulate rainfall on which agriculture and coastal resources depend, and they are of great importance to regional and global climate. Furthermore, tropical forests are breeding grounds for new medicines. Twenty-five percent of prescription drugs come from tropical forests. The United States National Cancer Institute has identified over 3000 plants that are active against cancer. Seventy percent of them can be found in rainforests.

Regrettably, tropical forests are rapidly disappearing. It is estimated that 30 million acres (an area larger than the State of Pennsyl-

vania) are lost each year. The heavy debt burden of many countries is a contributing factor because they must resort to exploitation of their natural resources (particularly the extraction of timber, oil, and precious metals) to generate revenue to service their external debt. At the same time, poor governments tend to have few resources available to set aside and protect tropical forests. The TFCA addresses these economic pressures by authorizing the President to allow eligible countries to engage in debt swaps, buybacks or reduction/restructuring in exchange for protecting threatened tropical forests on a sustained basis.

The debt for nature mechanisms in the TFCA have proven to be an effective, market-oriented means to leverage scarce funds available for international conservation. The host country places an amount in its tropical forest fund that typically exceeds the cost to the U.S. government of the debt reduction agreement. Furthermore, because these tropical forest funds have integrity and are broadly supported within the host country, conservation organizations are interested in placing their own money in these tropical forest funds producing additional leverage of Federal conservation dollars.

Seven TFCA agreements have been concluded to date: Bangladesh, El Salvador, Belize, Peru, the Philippines, Panama and Colombia. These agreements have generated more than \$70 million in long-term income commitments for tropical forest conservation. Private donors have contributed more than \$5 million to TFCA swaps, leveraging the U.S. government funds. Active deals are currently being negotiated with Jamaica and Sri Lanka. Several other countries have expressed interest in the program including Guatemala, Ecuador, Paraguay, St. Vincent, Botswana, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia, Brazil, and Kenya.

This bill will improve the TFCA and reauthorize it at \$20 million in FY 2005, which is included in the President's budget request; \$25 million in FY 2006; and \$30 million in FY 2007.

The Tropical Forest Conservation Act is an excellent program that is working well and worthy of reauthorization. I urge all members to support this important, market-oriented approach to conserving the world's most threatened tropical forests.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION PROHIBITING EXTRAORDINARY RENDITION

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, the prison abuses at Abu Ghraib were a national disgrace and have rightly been the subject of anger and condemnation. But another torture practice continues to go on without any public attention. Under the name "extraordinary rendition", the CIA reportedly sends terrorism suspects, sometimes on the flimsiest of evidence, to foreign countries that are known to employ torture in prisoner interrogation. This practice is against all U.S. and international law and is a moral outrage, and it must be stopped.

The practice of extraordinary rendition, the extra-judicial removal of people in U.S. custody both domestically and abroad to foreign governments that are known to use torture, has received little attention because of the degree of secrecy with which it occurs. Attention was drawn to the practice in September 2002 when Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen, was seized while in transit to Canada through JFK airport, and sent to Jordan and later Syria at the request of the CIA. While in Syria, Arar was tortured and held in a dark, 3-by-6-foot cell for nearly a year. He was ultimately released and detailed his story to the media upon his return to Canada.

Although the more recent numbers have not been made public, outgoing CIA director George Tenet testified to the 9/11 Commission in October 2002 that over 70 people had been subject to rendition before September 11, 2001. Human rights organizations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the Center for Constitutional Rights and the ACLU have detailed numerous other cases and are pursuing litigation in some of them. On June 21, the Canadian government launched an investigation into Arar's case.

My bill directs the State Department to compile a list of countries that commonly practice torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment during detention and interrogation, and prohibits rendition to any nation on this list, unless the Secretary of State certifies that the nation has made significant progress in human rights. It also specifies that written or verbal assurances from a foreign government that a person will not be tortured are not sufficient basis to override this prohibition. The bill explicitly permits legal, treaty-based extradition, in which suspects have the right to appeal in a U.S. court to block the proposed transfer based on the likelihood that they would be subjected to torture or other inhumane treatment.

Extraordinary rendition is outsourcing torture, and it is morally repugnant to allow such a practice to continue. President Bush has asserted that 'the values of this country are such that torture is not a part of our soul and our being.' The legislation I am introducing today is designed to ensure that we not only ban torture conducted by our own forces but we also stop the practice of contracting out torture to other nations. Torture enabled by extraordinary rendition is outrageous and must be stopped.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE UKRAINIAN MONUMENT TO TARAS SHEVCHENKO

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, June 26, 2004, the Ukrainian-American community will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Taras Shevchenko monument in Washington, DC. The monument inspired and united Ukrainians to speak about the cruelty and injustice of the former Soviet Union and attracted international support. Since independence, Ukraine has made significant progress in its transition to a democratic society.